The purpose of the Jacksonville Bed Bug Task Force is to enhance the quality of life for Jacksonville residents through Extension education and outreach programming on bed bug awareness.

Task Force Members

Task Force members, not including University or Extension faculty, donated 187.5 hours of their time towards educational events. The total value of their volunteer efforts was $3,450.00.

The task force includes 24 members from the Jacksonville community. Members represent groups such as the Duval County Public Schools, City of Jacksonville, ElderSource, HUD, Duval County Health Department, local pest management professionals, University of Florida-IFAS, Duval County Extension Office, and the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Background

The Jacksonville Bed Bug Task Force was formed in February 2011 as a result of increased requests regarding information about bed bugs to the local county extension agent. At the same time, the Duval County Health Department and the Duval County Public Schools began receiving an increase of calls and concerns about bed bugs. The local Extension Office partnered with entomologists at the University of Florida/IFAS to initiate the Jacksonville Bed Bug Task Force to help promote bed bug awareness and provide education to Jacksonville residents.

Initially, task force members identified objectives, goals, and needs based on what they considered necessary for the community. Projects were then prioritized to determine what the task force would complete first. The task force focused on projects that could make large educational impacts and be used by several groups or organizations. Projects planned for 2011 included a youth enrichment curriculum, posters, a website, and educational events. The target audiences include schools, day cares, community centers, senior centers, and missions.
Educational Efforts and Accomplishments

- Two hundred and twenty-six educational contacts were made at eight different programs provided by task force members.
- One YouTube Video with 126 views was created by the Duval County Public Schools Communication’s Department about the bed bug teacher training.
- Three publications were created including a 99 page youth curriculum, Bed Bugs and Book Bags and a poster “What’s Biting You?” published in English and Spanish. There has been one-hundred printed curriculum books and 250 posters distributed.
- Two web-based communication and teaching tools were created including the Duval County Bed Bug website and a 30 minute online bed bug training and quiz. One hundred and forty-six individuals have completed the online exam.
- One press release was distributed, which resulted in five websites and blogs picking-up the story, five newspapers or newsletters, and four facebook or twitter mentions with 6,258 likes and 657 followers.
- Three interviews were provided by task force members.
- Three exhibits were created and presented at local events to 39,300 contacts.
- Two abstracts were published in conference proceedings about the task force and the curriculum.
- Members presented the curriculum or spoke about the task force at five professional conferences to 336 contacts.
- Two articles were contributed to local extension newsletters about the task force and the curriculum and downloaded by 1,084 individuals.
- The 4-H curriculum Bed Bugs and Book Bags is a communications award state winner and a regional finalist for the Florida Association for County Agriculture Agents and the National Association for County Agriculture Agents in the category of learning module.

Funding

An Extension Program Enhancement grant was awarded by the University of Florida in the amount of $12,000 for the year 2011-2012. The grant funds were used for pilot-testing the Bed Bugs and Book Bags youth enrichment curriculum program in Duval County. The grant included funding to provide training to teachers in Duval County, provide an in-service training to extension agents across the state on the curriculum, and aid in launching an online training for teachers in the county.

http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu/bed_bugs.html